HANGING WITH THE BAD BOYS OF DANCE

RASTA THOMAS WILL ROCK YOU. PAGES 10-11

metro

PHILADELPHIA'S #1 DAILY NEWSPAPER

Thursday, February 20, 2014 www.metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

Comic book spins tales of justice

PAGE 02

It's hard out here for a food truck

PAGE 14

Courtney Barnett is Aus-some!

PAGE 15

Temple made. Temple University medical student and skier Arman Serebrakian is representing Armenia and Philadelphia in Sochi.

On the slopes. He finished a respectable 46th in the giant slalom and will race again this Saturday.

PAGES 18-19

'Alpine Owl'

Temple's Arman Serebrakian is soaking up every Olympic moment he can before his second run down the slopes on Saturday at 7:45 a.m. / COURTESY OF ARMAN SEREBRAKIAN

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1 NEWS

Local tweet

"Semis in Olympic hockey will see rematches of 2010 finalists USA v. Canada and 2006 finalists Sweden v. Finland. #Olympics2014 #Sochi2014"

Hopefully the result is better this year, @jerseycoach.

Top 3

What's trending at Metro.us

1 'PHOTOS: The most memorable GIFs from the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi'

2 'VIDEO: 3-year-old girl unwraps gift to find her dad home from Afghanistan'

3 'Nancy Kerrigan's famous footage still revisited 20 years later'

Local writer helps pen anti-bullying comic

See more at www.metro.us

"You Are Not Alone." A Philly native helped publish an almost 200-page anthology.

"You Are Not Alone" is a graphic novel that addresses bullying and abuse issues. / GRAYHAVEN COMICS

Marc Lombardi was bullied because of his weight.

"I've fluctuated in weight since I was a kid, it went up and down," said Lombardi, a native of South Philadelphia. "And when I was fat, things were a problem."

These stories, his personal tales of battling the bullies, were his contributions to the graphic novel "You Are Not Alone," published by GrayHaven Comics, which attempts to reach out to the bullied and to show them — with images and words — that it's not forever.

"The general message," Lombardi said, "is to give hope to the victims of those issues and let them know they are not alone."

Lombardi, 40, a graduate of Central High School and Temple University but an Abington resident since 2003, works in transportation. He joined GrayHaven recently as a fun side project.

And then 20 children and six adults were shot and killed in Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., 11 days before Christmas in 2012.

Pondering how a collection of comic book writers and artists could help in its own way, the company's creative directors decided to try and help address an entire issue instead of an isolated incident.

They wanted to try and offer hope to those young people who are tormented and abused because of their race, creed, color, sexual orientation or physical appearance — those who are most likely to lash out violently.

So they combined their powers and talents to create what would become, they hoped, a beacon of hope.

The result was a collection of short stories in the form of a graphic novel that would be distributed to schools, youth groups, shelters and alike for free to help students deal with typical instances of bullying.

They felt their medium was a perfect megaphone.

"We figured that comic books are sort of an outlet [in which] kids might be a little more accessible to the message," Lombardi said. "There are only so many after-school specials that you can watch. And you sort of hear the same message delivered the same way time and time again. It loses its impact."

And they hope to reach the bully as well.

"Not only do we want to reach out to the people who have been bullied and give them hope," he said, "but [we want to] reach out to someone who's bullying someone and really give them some perspective."

Besides bullying, stories cover violence, homophobia and racism. "We really tried to cover as many topics as possible," Lombardi said.

At the end of each chapter, contact information for resources that can help with similar problems are listed.

The team is already planning a sequel, which brings the victims to the forefront.

"The goal," said GrayHaven Editor-in-chief Andrew Goletz, of Reading, "is to have the kids write it."

TOMMY ROWAN
tommy.rowan@metro.us

Copies

Any educational, youth or victims organizations interested in a copy of the book should email the company at gatheringanthology@hotmail.com.

- The book is also available on its website.

Quoted

"We figured that comic books are sort of an outlet [in which] kids might be a little more accessible to the message." Lombardi

DA discusses bullying

'Kids can be very, very brutal'

District Attorney Seth Williams, who spoke at an anti-bullying event Wednesday at Dimner Beeber Middle School in Malvern, said talking about bullying helps to open discussions concerning conflict resolution.

"Kids can be very, very brutal and it leads many students to not want to go to school, it leads to violence," he said. "And so us talking about bullying really allows us to begin the discussion about how can we resolve conflict."

Changing language. City ends use of term 'mental retardation'

Mayor Michael Nutter signed a bill Wednesday that effectively edits the city code to halt the use of "mental retardation" and replace it with the phrase "intellectual disability."

"Words are powerful," said Councilman Dennis O'Brien, after the mayor signed Bill No. 130723.

"Individuals with intelligent disabilities and autism ... don't have a prejudiced bone in their body. They are unspoiled by hate and discrimination and derogatory terms. Therefore it is only just they not be visited with those derogatory terms," O'Brien said.

SAM NEWHOUSE

Foodies

Philly-area restaurants nominated

The James Beard Foundation announced its semifinalists Wednesday for the 2014 Chef and Restaurant Awards.

The ceremony will be held in New York City on May 2 and 5.

Among the nominees: Laurel and Serpico for Best New Restaurant; The Franklin Mortgage & Investment Co. for Outstanding Bar Program; Mark Vetri for Outstanding Chef and his restaurant, Vetri, was nominated for Outstanding Service.

Kate Jacoby of Vedge was nominated for Outstanding Pastry Chef; Fork for Outstanding Restaurant; Stephen Starr, Marcie Turney and Valerie Safran for Outstanding Restaurateur; Tom Peters of Monk's Cafe for Outstanding Wine, Spirits, or Beer Professional.

Christopher Kearse of Will and Ben Puchowitz of CHeU Noodle Bar were nominated for the Rising Star Chef of the Year.

And Pierre Calmels of Bibou, Joe Cicala of Le Virtu, Rich Landau of Vedge, Brad Spencer of Amis and Lee Styer of Fond were nominated for Best Chef: Mid-Atlantic. METRO

A candle for Ukrainian Independence

A woman lights a candle for the Ukrainians who died during a demonstration at Independence Square in Kiev. The protest and memorial took play at Independence Mall on Wednesday. See more coverage of the Ukrainian riots on page 6. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER

Faith-healer parents jailed in death of infant

See more at www.metro.us

Not a prayer. An ultra-religious couple got prison time for allowing their 7-month-old baby to die from pneumonia.

Herbert and Catherine Schaible were found guilty of neglect. / PPD

Herbert and Catherine Schaible were sentenced Wednesday to three-and-a-half to seven years in prison and 30 months probation on third-degree murder charges for the April 2013 death of their son Brandon.

The Schaibles, who are life-long members of First Century Gospel Church in Juniata Park, prayed over their son as he died from bacterial pneumonia. They were previously convicted and sentenced to probation in 2011 for the death of their 2-year-old son Kent, also from bacterial pneumonia.

"All it would've taken was a 911 call," said Assistant District Attorney Joanne Pescatore at the sentencing.

"Everybody in the system failed these children," Pescatore said, her voice choked with emotion. "It was so foreseeable to me that this was going to happen."

The Schaibles' six other children are all currently in foster care.

"I would change places with them in an instant if I could," Herbert Schaible said of his two dead sons before being sentenced.

Catherine Schaible said she would "accept whatever the court decides."

Judge Benjamin Lerner said that the sentence was intended to prevent them from making medical decisions for their children ever again, but was lessened because they pleaded guilty.

"You've killed two of your children," Lerner said. "It wasn't the lord who decided to take him [Brandon]. You two took him. That's why he's not celebrating any more of his birthdays."

Quoted

"I feel that I failed as a mother, because they aren't alive. ... My faith is that we should be able to pray, not have to use medicine."

Catherine Schaible

SAM NEWHOUSE
sam.newhouse@metro.us

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Wanda Jones '10,
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Dover Air Force Base.
Airman arrested in the murder of toddler

A 25-year-old Dover Air Force Base airman was charged Wednesday with the murder of a toddler in 2012.

Justin K. Corbett is suspected of murdering 21-month-old Evan J. Dudley in the early evening of Nov. 3, 2012, according to Delaware State police.

Justin Corbett / DSP

State Police said Corbett called authorities on Nov. 3 from his house, which is located on the base, and reported that Evan was unresponsive after falling down a flight of carpeted stairs.

The baby's mother, also an airman, legally assigned Corbett as the child's primary caregiver before she deployed.

After a few transfers, Evan died on Nov. 7, 2012, at Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children.

An autopsy revealed Evan "suffered multiple injuries, including retinal and other eye injuries, multiple contusions on his head, and brain swelling and bleeding," according to a news release.

After an investigation by the state attorney general and state police, the cause of death was ruled homicide by blunt force trauma, state police said.

Corbett was sent to the James T. Vaughn Correctional Facility in lieu of a $100,000 cash bond. METRO

The cookie company can't crumble

Members of the BCTGM Union Local 492 picketed in front of the former Kraft factory on Roosevelt Boulevard in Northeast Philadelphia Wednesday to protest Mondelez International's decision to close the factory and cut 350 jobs. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER

Torched

Mentally ill woman convicted of killing mother

A woman who shot her mother, then doused her in gasoline and set her ablaze in a Cobbs Creek home, was found guilty but mentally ill Wednesday.

Jahina Damon, 35, killed her mother, Lolita Lee, 53, and another woman was badly burned in the resulting house fire on the 6000 block of Cobbs Creek Parkway.

Damon reportedly shot her mother in the chest inside their kitchen and shot at two other people in the house but missed, before setting the fire around 5 a.m. She was arrested in Maryland and returned to Philadelphia authorities.

Damon will be sentenced for murder and arson charges on May 13. METRO

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Berkut riot police shoot rubber bullets toward anti-government protesters on Independence Square on Wednesday in Kiev, Ukraine. / GETTY IMAGES

United States urges Ukraine to call truce

Deadly. At least 26 people were killed after riot police entered Independence Square on Tuesday.

The United States on Wednesday urged the Ukrainian government to pull back riot police from Independence Square in Kiev, call a truce and hold discussions with the opposition after least 26 people died in the worst violence since the former Soviet republic gained independence.

White House Deputy National Security Adviser Ben Rhodes said the United States would consider the use of sanctions against those responsible for the violence in Ukraine. REUTERS

Quoted

"I think the scenes that we saw in Kiev yesterday were completely outrageous and have no place in the 21st century." Rhodes

Condemnation

EU to hold meeting on sanctions

European Union leaders condemned what they called "the unjustified use of excessive force by the Ukrainian authorities" in Kiev and said they were urgently preparing targeted sanctions against officials responsible for the crackdown.

EU officials said President Viktor Yanukovich would not be on the list to keep channels of dialogue open. The foreign ministers of Germany, France and Poland will visit him on Thursday, hours before an emergency EU meeting to decide on the sanctions. REUTERS

President Obama

Order signed to speed up export approvals

President Barack Obama signed an executive order on Wednesday that will attempt to speed from days to minutes how quickly small businesses gain U.S. government approval for exports or imports.

The order is the latest example of Obama using executive authority to act on his own where he can without needing congressional approval. REUTERS

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2 CULTURE

Twitter feed

Today, Chloe Grace Moretz is experiencing technical difficulties, Niall Horan has been missing his band mates, Sofia Vergara is having a good time Down Under and Joss Whedon isn't up for walking.

@ChloeGMoretz: strangest thing just happened to my phone it wouldn't take a charge so i did a full restart and bingo.. charging.. weird.

@NiallOfficial: First time we have all been together for a while now! lookin forward t seeing the lads ! #BRITs2014

@SofiaVergara: Bruce Springsteen concert in Sydney!!!

@josswhedon: Stairs are so serious

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

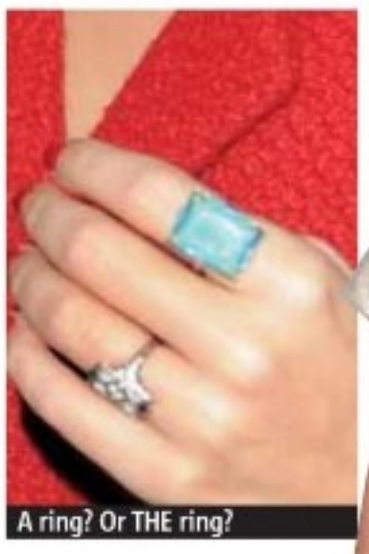
Wiig dons a Styles-ish wig for Fallon

Harry? That you? Nope. Just Kristen Wiig dressing up like the One Direction member on "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" on Tuesday. Her commitment to the character only went skin-deep, though: As soon as she began to answer questions as "Harry," it was clear she didn't know One Direction from a handsome, tuneful hole in the ground. Three nights in, "The Tonight Show" under Fallon's watch is going great: Between 9 and 10 million people tuned in to watch his debut on Monday.

Katy Perry insists you look at her ring finger

Katy Perry is sending the gossip world into a tizzy by sporting the same diamond ring on a very suspicious finger for the past few days. The first time, we all chalked it up to her being fashionable — but then the singer had the audacity to wear the art-deco-influenced ring yet again at the Elle Style Awards on Tuesday in London.

"What does it mmm-meeeeaaaannnnn?" your brain is annoyingly asking, as we are all conditioned to be concerned with this for some reason. I wish I knew — so far both the Perry and John Mayer camp are being mum on the situation. One thing is for sure: The only way she could troll us any harder is if she started wearing a fake baby bump.



A ring? Or THE ring?

THE WORD

Dorothy Robinson takes on the world of gossip.

DOROTHY ROBINSON
@dorothyatmetro
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Shia LaBeouf is skywriting again

Shia LaBeouf has been all over the tabloids and the blogs and the Twitter lately. But for those who don't follow celebrity gossip on any medium, Shia has them covered too — they just have to look up into the sky.

LaBeouf has taken to skywriting for the third time, hiring planes to write "#STARTCREATING" in the sky above Los Angeles, according to E! Online. His previous messages were "I am sorry Daniel Clowes" and "#STOPCREATING," both in January.

It's great to have Shia's permission to start making stuff. I hope he follows his own advice, since he's never created anything in particular. LaBeouf's meltdown/art project/generous subsidy to L.A.'s skywriting industry began in December, when his short film "HowardCantour.com" was revealed to be a rip-off of a Daniel Clowes comic, "Justin M. Damiano." Since then, he's tweeted a slew of plagiarized quotes and apologies, hired the aforementioned skywriters and last week held an "art installation" in which he sat in a room with a paper bag over his head reading "I am not famous anymore" while weeping — which some would say was a rip-off of Marina Abromovic's "The Artist Is Present."

In case you can't tell, I am heartily sick of this kid — he ripped an artist off, got caught, and he's been trying to reposition his screw-up as art ever since. I would rather see Justin Bieber get an Oscar than hear another word from LaBeouf on the subject.

MELINDA TAUB

Talking points

DeGeneres is "lucky" with De Rossi

PORTIA AND ELLEN: STILL HAPPY!

Ellen DeGeneres is eager to put to rest rumors circulating in some tabloids that her marriage to Portia De Rossi is on the rocks. "The tabloids had a photo of Portia not wearing her wedding ring. She goes, 'I didn't wear it because when I ride horses and I'm holding the reins, it gives me a blister,'" DeGeneres explains to People magazine. "The truth is — and this is corny — I fall more in love with Portia all the time. I really do. She surprises me all the time."

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2 'Pompeii'
Spoiler: Mount Vesuvius erupts and wipes out everyone on the island of Pompeii. Before that happens, there's some Roman intrigue to be had, some of it involving a "Gladiator" knockoff starring a "Game of Thrones" stud.

3 'The Wind Rises'
Legendary Japanese animator Hayao Miyazaki ("My Neighbor Totoro," "Spirited Away") once claimed this study of a man who designed WWII fighter planes was his retirement film. Then he said he wasn't retiring. We're not sure whether he means it, but you should still see this.

4 'Visitors'
Almost 30 years ago, monk-turned-filmmaker Godfrey Reggio seared retinas with his time lapse-heavy, Philip Glass-scored, maximalist enviro-art film "Koyaanisqatsi." He returns with this more somber piece of contemplation featuring, mostly, people staring at you.

5 'Omar'
"Paradise Now" filmmaker Hany Abu-Assad returns with another prickly look at Palestinian-Israeli relations, with a young freedom fighter being forced into becoming an informant after the assassination of a soldier.

Must see

'3 Days to Kill'

1 Once upon a time Kevin Costner was the biggest star in the world. After ages filing ace supporting work, he's starring in everything this year, starting with this action-drama about a dying assassin trying to reconnect with his daughter (Hailee Steinfeld).

Kevin Costner returns to lead duties in "3 Days to Kill." / JULIAN TORRES

6 'In Secret'
Elizabeth Olsen headlines this take on Emile Zola's "Therese Raquin," concerning a young woman who conspires with her lover (Oscar Isaac) to do away with the man she was forced to marry (Tom Felton).

7 'About Last Night'
In the 1980s, David Mamet's bleak and coarse "Sexual Perversity in Chicago" was pounded into a rom-com with Demi Moore. Now it's a Kevin Hart vehicle, which is more like it.

8 'The Lego Movie'
If the idea of a movie based on the plastic toy blocks seems inexplicable, at least someone was passionate enough to hire talented "21 Jump Street" guys Phil Lord and Chris Miller to do it.

ADMIT ONE

Metro rounds up what's in cinemas this week.

MATT PRIGGE
matt.prigge@metro.us

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1. Viagra Prescribing Information, Revised January 2010 2. Cialis Prescribing Information, Revised October 2011 3. Levitra Prescribing Information, Revised November 2011 4. European Society for Sexual Medicine (ESSM) Website, downloaded 11/14/12. 5. AMS 700® with MS Pump® Inflatable Penile Prosthesis Instructions for Use (IFU)

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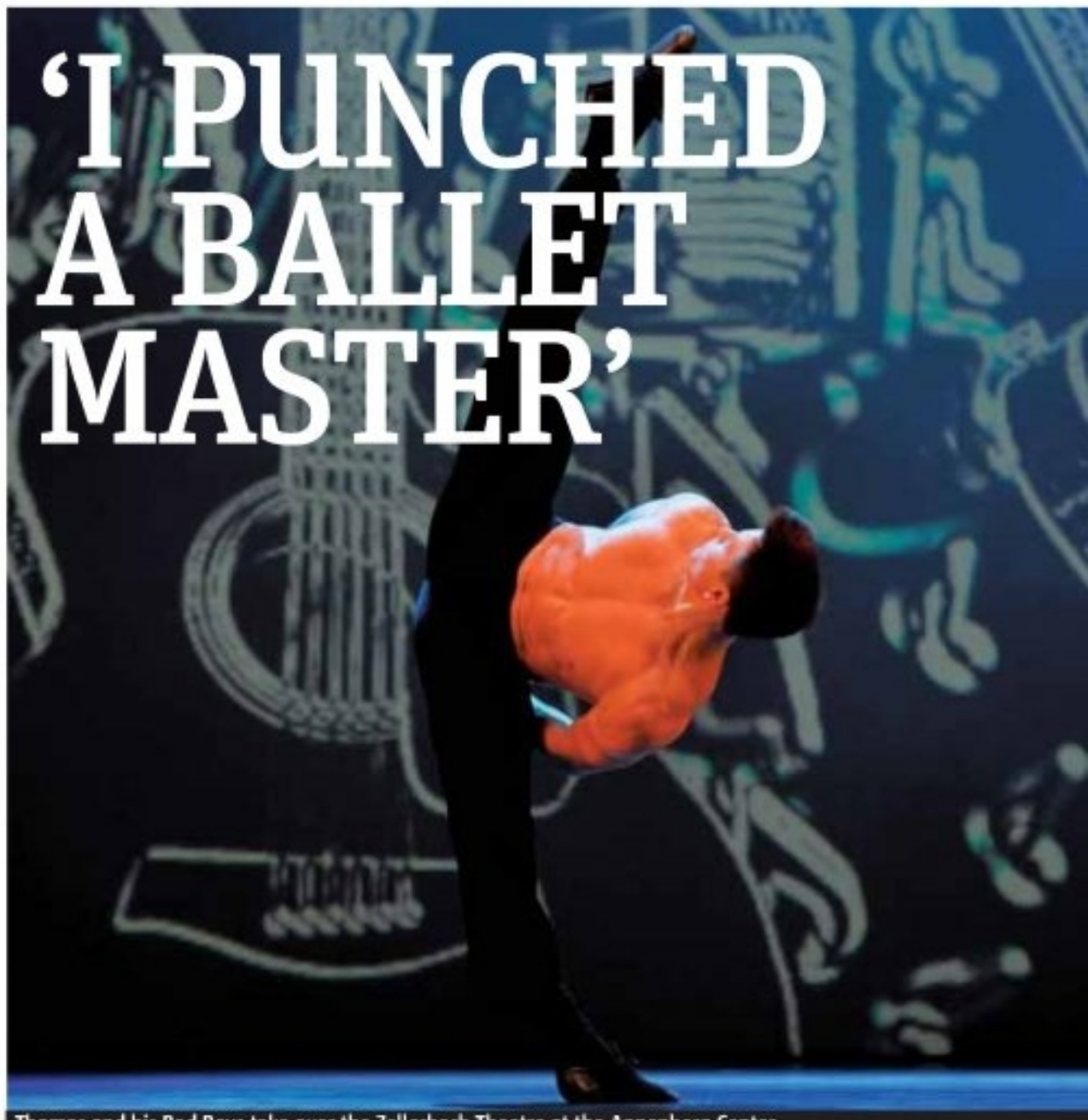

Thomas and his Bad Boys take over the Zellerbach Theatre at the Annenberg Center, 3680 Walnut St., Feb. 20-22. Full details are at www.annenbergcenter.org. / PROVIDED

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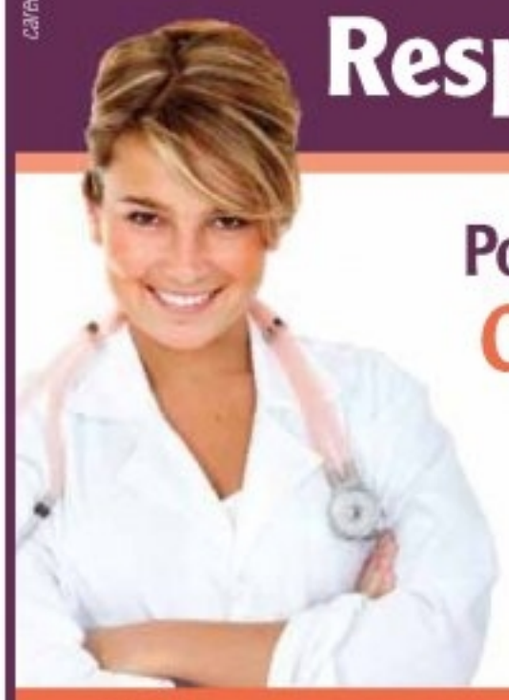

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Versatility. Don't think dancers are tough? Check out these Bad Boys.

Just how bad are Rasta Thomas and the Bad Boys of Dance?

Well, let's just say you probably don't want to get on Thomas' bad side.

"I had a little bit of a hot temper," says Thomas, on the phone. "I pushed and punched a ballet master once. I've hit a few people — I guess that's the Bad Boys of Dance."

Thomas, 32, says his brawling days are over and for a good reason.

"I have a 6-year-old daughter now," says Thomas, who is married to choreographer Adrienne Canterna.

The flying fists may be gone but the fire for dancing excellence is still there. The Bad Boys set up shop at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts tonight through Feb. 22. It's a high-energy merging of classical dance and just about anything that you can imagine, from hip-hop to tap, set to the music of Michael Jackson, Coldplay, Robin Thicke, Maroon 5, Alicia Keys and more.

"We definitely believe strongly that a classical foundation is the base that's necessary to be a Bad Boy and it's the foundation for a good to great dancer," says Thomas, who is based in Maryland. "So we heavily emphasize that all our of our dancers have a ballet base and we make sure that they can jazz it up and mix it up with contemporary, hip-hop or sometimes tap dancing — we love versatility."

Thomas was born in San Francisco, raised in Saudi Arabia, and studied dance at the prestigious Kirov Academy in Washington, D.C. He turned heads in the dance world as a teenager by winning a truckload of international competitions, and went on to appear in the film "One Last Dance" with Patrick Swayze, dance at the White House and the Academy Awards and star on Broadway in the Twyla Tharp-Billy Joel musical, "Movin' Out."

The Bad Boys aren't exactly slouching on their résumés either. Members' credits include Broadway, "So You Think You Can Dance," "Dancing with the Stars" and the troupe's "Rock the Ballet."

CHRIS JORDAN
letters@metro.us

Age ain't nothin' but a number?

Baby boys

Thomas stays on the scene but he's no longer on the stage — it's a young man's game, he says.

"Our average age is 18 to 25, so it's tricky, because of the rigors and the difficulty of our show, once they get over 25 it almost becomes too hard of a show for them," Thomas says. "It's more of a gypsy lifestyle."

Quoted

"Dance has a magical power to make people happy and to relieve their troubles for the two hours they're watching you. At the end of the day, that's what's important."
Rasta Thomas

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Front row

At the shows

Buy tickets for the Friday runway show, featuring Dom Streater and other designers, at PhillyFashionWeek.org. Also on deck: Saturday's International Modesty Runway Show — a women-only event by the Muslimah Convention highlighting more demure designs — and the Haute Couture Runway Show, both also at Crane Arts.

Philly Fashion Week: Designers to watch

Style. The city goes vogue with a "Project Runway" winner and others showing off their collections.

Time to step up your style game. Philly Fashion Week is underway, with local and visiting designers showing off their game-changing looks.

We have our eye on Dominique "Dom" Streater (pictured at left), the West Philly native and Moore College graduate who won the latest season of "Project Runway."

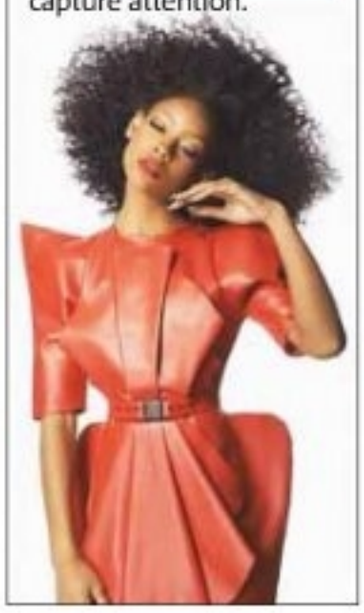
Streater is debuting her Prima collection Friday, Feb. 21, in Philly Fashion Week's ready-to-wear runway show, at the Crane Arts Building (1400 N. American St.).

1 Clarenz Couture

While Dom Streater focuses on versatile looks for women, Clarence Clottey has got the men covered with precisely tailored suits designed to make the wearer "feel two inches taller and seven pounds lighter."

2 Bishme Cromartie

This designer's creations are for the fashion forward. Cromartie, who's been a favorite of Philly Fashion Week since 2008, uses bold colors and eclectic designs to capture attention.



3 Autumn Lin

Prefer a more feminine look? Lin designs soft, flowing garments — but with an edge. She's a Philadelphia Fashion Incubator-Macy's graduate and appeared on Bravo's "Styled To Rock" by Rihanna.

4 AnaBella Don

Don is an up-and-coming designer who transforms various textures of leather to create sleek black-and-white looks.

RACHEL VIGODA
rachel.vigoda@metro.us

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The stats don't lie

Patti Stanger, Perez Hilton and Dr. Emily Morse talk sex at a recent Match.com event. / GETTY IMAGES

Redheads orgasm most. That is just one of the shocking facts we learned from Match.com's "Singles in America" survey.

Match.com invited celebrity blogger Perez Hilton, sex expert and Bravo TV star Dr. Emily Morse and millionaire matchmaker Patti Stanger to discuss the results of its survey, "Singles in America." We have the results — and the reactions.

The fact: Single women with red hair have the most orgasms.
What it means: Visit your hairdresser ASAP and get those locks dyed.
What people are saying: "When I lived here in New York City I colored my hair bright red for a year, and I had more sex than I ever had before. Not commitment, but sex!" **PATTI STANGER**

The fact: Seventy-four percent of men would be comfortable dating a woman who has had more previous sexual partners than they did.
What it means: Don't hold back. He won't judge you.
What people are saying: "Never answer and just tell your partner that you never had better sex than now!" **DR. EMILY MORSE**

The fact: Only 15 percent of men and 12 percent of women say they'd ideally want to have sex every day.
What it means: It's OK to have a headache sometimes.
What people are saying: "I want it at least once a day." **PEREZ HILTON**

LASSE EMIL KRISTIANSEN
letters@metro.us

Another fact

Meeting online is the No. 1 way singles found their last first date

What it means: Don't go out on weekends. Get a glass of wine, turn on your computer and find a date at home.
What people are saying: "The funny thing is that my New Year's resolution for 2014 is to try and be sluttier. But instead of being slutty, now I've already gone on 12 dates this year. And I only had sex once!" **PEREZ HILTON**

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For your sweet tooth

Sweet Box Cupcakes

What you'll get: An ever-changing array of delectable sweets that you won't want to share.

The challenge: "Wear a lot of layers," advises Gretchen Fantini, proprietor of Sweet Box. "And I tend to pace back and forth. We've been fortunate the past few years with milder winters. I think everyone will concur that we are all over the snow." Frantini keeps spirits high by switching things up around the "office": "I try to freshen it up with new daily flavors."

Surviving winter in a food truck

Mobile. We talk to top food truck owners about how they've been battling the snowpocalypse.

This winter has been tough on everyone, especially those in the food business. Dealt a massive snow blow are the city's many food trucks that hustle to sling lunch on the curb. We spoke to some mobile food workers and learned that it takes creativity, optimism and a lot of warm layers to make it work on the streets.

Spot Burger

What you'll get: Hand-formed burgers with bold toppings and intriguing combinations

The challenge: "Spot Burger is a small, 4-by-8-cart," says owner Josh Kim. "Being in a small enclosure, you can imagine how warm it can get." Kim also uses the trailer's small size to maneuver around the snow and get closer to customers. "The biggest trucks need to jockey for position, but I don't. I can park right on the curb. It's hard to attract customers to your window when they have to trudge through snow."

Say Cheese

What you'll get: Gooey grilled cheeses and panini

The challenge: "You got to worry about water — hand-washing water, steam-washing water — that can take a toll on a truck. Pipes could burst," says owner Alan Krawitz. "Most trucks have diamond plate floors, and those metal floors tend to get very cold. If water spills, it could freeze. We make sure our feet stay warm and dry."

Prime Stache

What you'll get: Hearty sandwiches

The challenge: "It's a challenge to stay warm, but there are tricks to the trade," says GM Dan Pennachietti. "Dress in layers, make sure the truck is insulated. Heat is mostly generated from the cooking utensils, like the grill. Turn the exhaust hood off and the heat stays in the truck. It can get to 85 degrees real quick."

JULIA WEST
letters@metro.us

Would you fight the elements for customizable cream cheese?
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Schmear It

What you'll get: Hot bagels with customizable schmears

The challenge: Dave Fine is Schmear It's founder, and he's seen this weather take a bite out of his customer base. "Our regulars still come out, which is so appreciated and why we strive to brave the elements every day. It's this dedicated relationship that makes the food truck culture in Philly so special," says Fine. He gets creative, too. "Some of our spicy items — the schmears incorporating Sriracha and wasabi — gained popularity with the cold."

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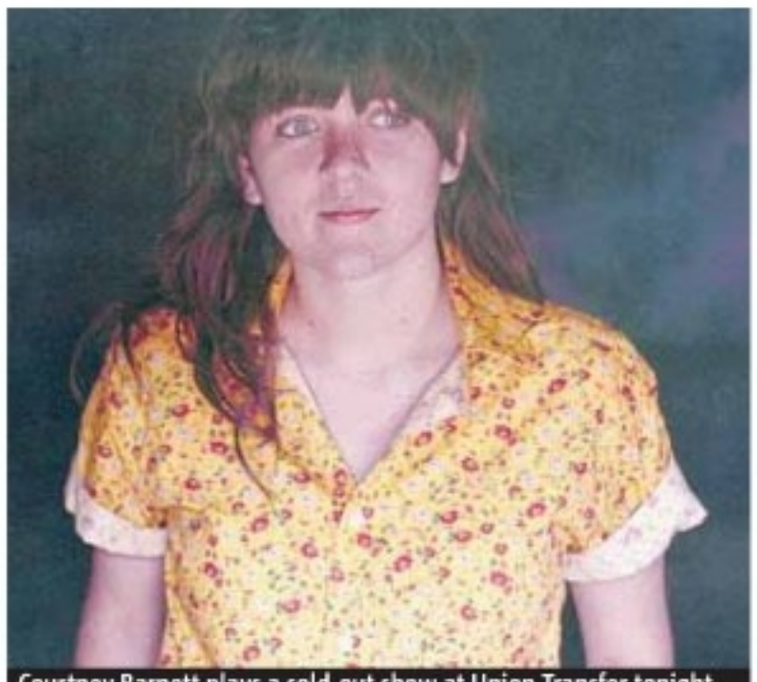
Down Under. Courtney Barnett is a glimpse of what Lena Dunham would be like as a singer.

Last year was Courtney Barnett's first time out of her native Australia besides two trips to New Zealand. At the CMJ music festival, the 24-year-old singer/songwriter's unapologetic tunes garnered the attention of high-profile media outlets — and attracted scores of new followers.

"It was cool because it's kind of a mix of industry people, which is always a bit weird, but there's an awesome off-the-street kind of crowd of music lovers," she says of her audiences at CMJ. "Some of them had heard of us and some hadn't. Well, most hadn't, so, it's good."

Though she claims to be shy, any trace of that melts away onstage. She's the Lena Dunham of indie rock, but with the short story skills of someone like Miranda July. From under shaggy brunette bangs, her lyrics come like a lazy challenge: "I sleep in late / Another day / Oh what a wonder / Oh what a waste. / It's a Monday / It's so mundane / What exciting things / Will happen today?" Those are the first lines of her breakout hit, "Avant Gardener," from "The Double EP: A Sea of Split Peas," set to release in North America on April 15 via Mom+Pop.

Her maiden voyage over, Barnett is making her way back through a slew of sold-out shows here before a gig supporting Billy Bragg on his Australian tour, which kicks off in March. **KASIA PILAT**



Courtney Barnett plays a sold-out show at Union Transfer tonight.
TAJETTE O'HALLORAN

Backwards

Ambulance ride of destiny

A self-proclaimed compulsive note-keeper, Barnett draws on real life experiences for inspiration for her music. "Avant Gardener" chronicles a seemingly innocuous attempt at gardening that ends in an ambulance ride: "It was just an anxiety attack or something I think, and we didn't know if it was like an allergy on top of it because I got this weird rash and then I stopped breathing," she says. "Just after it happened I went and stayed in the country for two weeks and did heaps of writing and stuff and that's when I wrote it, but we'd already written the music. It was weird, it was back-to-front."

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Julie Dorenbos and Susie Celek (the owners of Skin Palette) and Joe Conklin are the hosts. Presenters include Owens himself, Jon Runyan, Ed Rendell, Hollis Thomas and a cardboard cutout of his BFF, Donovan McNabb, to name a few.

KIDS

Philly Kids Rock Fest

Feb. 22, 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
Union Transfer
1026 Spring Garden St.
$12 in advance, $15 at the door, kids under 1 free; 215-232-2100
www.utphilly.com
It's a rock carnival for kids ages 2-7. Children's rock band The Lara & Joe Show will be performing, along with Nate & Kate's Kids Show and DJ Jon Gill. Kids will be able to make their own musical instruments to take home and pretend they're rock stars for the day by dressing the part. Karate demos and juggling routines will be going on throughout the day, and don't miss out on the moon bounce. It's one big rock 'n' roll dance party! Early entrance tickets get you in earlier at 9:45 a.m. and are $20 in advance, $25 at the door. **JULIE SHANNON**

MUSIC

MENDELSSOHN CLUB OF PHILADELPHIA

The Sound of Spirit: Part/ Haydn

Feb. 23, 4 p.m.
Church of the Holy Trinity
1904 Walnut St.
$28 and $30 online, $30 and $40 at the door
www.mcchorus.org
The Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia will present Haydn's "Mass in Time of War" and three pieces by Arvo Part, including "Adam's Lament." The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Soprano Barbara Berry, mezzo-soprano Jennifer Beattie, tenor Roy Hage and bass Brandon Cedel will also be performing. Two shorter works by Part, including the North American premiere of his "Estonian Lullaby" and "Salve Regina," will conclude the program.

COMEDY

Jim Jefferies

Feb. 21, 8 p.m.
Keswick Theatre
291 N. Keswick Ave., Glenside
$37.50, 215-572-7650
www.keswicktheatre.com
You may know Jefferies from "Legit," the comedy series he created now in its second season on FXX, or from his popular stand-up special on HBO, "I Swear to God," but he was first noticed in England while he was on various television shows. It's the first full North American tour for this controversial comedian.

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COURTESY OF SWEDISH IMAGE BANK

Semlor and a Movie

Feb. 22, 11 a.m.
American Swedish Historical Museum; 1900 Pattison Ave.; $12 in advance, $15 at the door; 215-389-1776; www.americanswedish.org
Taste the decadent Swedish treat semlor — puff pastry filled with almond paste and whipped cream — as you watch a Swedish film. They are traditionally eaten before the start of Lent.

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Horoscope

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20. Engage in opportunities that will expand your mind and skill set. Explore alternate sources of entertainment.

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20. Flexibility will be necessary when dealing with a personal or business partner, and will also help to strengthen your union.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21. You may be feeling romantic, but caution must be taken where intimacy is concerned. Hurt feelings will develop if your actions are misinterpreted.

♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20. Let your imagination inspire you. Find a hobby that stimulates it. Your efforts may be rewarding if you market your new skills.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22. You mustn't allow others to stifle your talents. Follow your intuition and keep your dreams in sight. Your excellent memory is important.

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22. Your home decor and improvement plans will prove challenging if you let someone meddle. Refrain from listening to anyone trying to deter you.

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22. Get to know your friends and neighbors better. You can obtain information by listening and observing how others react.

♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22. Don't jump to conclusions. The situation may turn out to be much different from the one you imagine. Do your homework.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21. Take a look at your personal and business relationships. Someone you are dealing with may be looking for a firm commitment.

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21. Resist telling anyone intimate details. Serious problems may arise if you are not mindful of someone else's privacy.

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan 20. Lighten up. Accepting invitations to social activities is a sure way to meet new and exciting people. A casual encounter may lead to a lasting friendship.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb 18. Your position may be jeopardized if someone tries to take credit for your work. Promote your accomplishments. BERNICE BEDE OSOL

Sudoku: Easy and hard

2								8
9		6	5			3	1	
	8		9	7				
	7	8				4		
	3	2		4		8	9	
		4				7	6	
				2	8		4	
	5	1			9	2		6
8								3

		9		3			7	
5	8	2			7			1
4		7						
8				1			2	
3		5				6		9
	9			5				3
						2		6
2			8			1	5	7
	5			6		4		

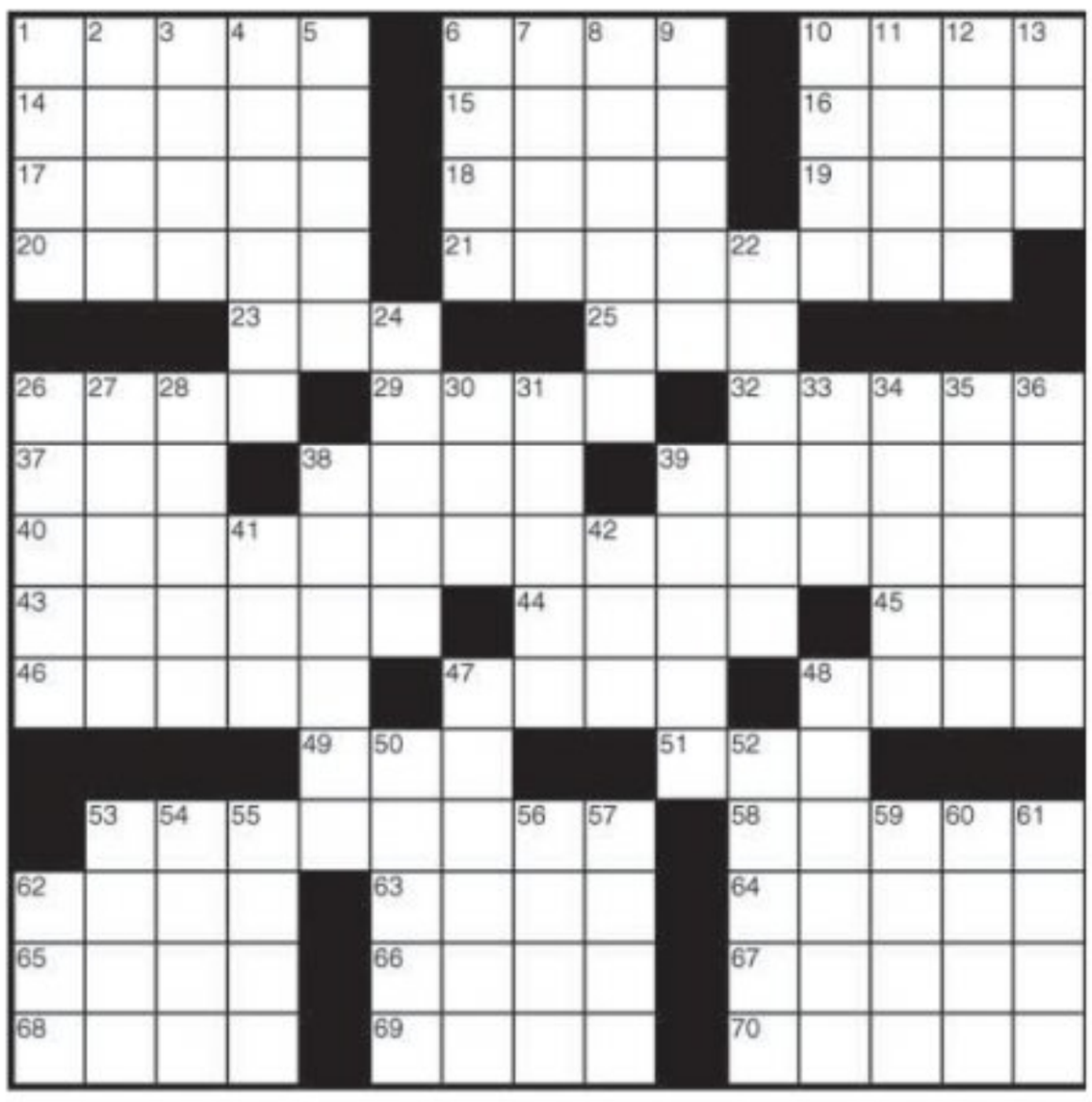
How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Crossword

Across
1 Cliff
6 Scout for trout
10 — dixit
14 Turbine part
15 Crazy
16 Jockey's brake
17 Century plant
18 Many a Norway king
19 Music and ballet
20 Giggle (hyph.)
21 Ruined Mayan city
23 Explain further
25 Apply a jimmy
26 Carpenter's jaws
29 WWW addresses
32 Part of MGM
37 Here, in Le Havre
38 Haleakala's isle
39 Ill humor
40 Snack servers (2 wds.)
43 It may be gross
44 Bireme movers
45 Mao — -tung
46 Muralist — Rivera
47 Late tennis great
48 Grind, as an ax
49 Common ID
51 Major conflict
53 Well-deserved break
58 Sandy expanse
62 Apiece
63 Pulpit
64 Google rival
65 Labor Dept. division
66 Produced, as eggs
67 Feed the fire
68 Parakeet treat
69 MOMA artist
70 Less forward

Down
1 Sitter's bane
2 Mezzanine
3 Idaho neighbor
4 Small pits in bone
5 Unchained
6 Plop down
7 Town east of Wichita
8 Sells hot tickets
9 Hang in midair
10 OPEC member
11 Amazon source
12 Area
13 USN rank
22 Tree sprites
24 Allman of rock
26 Bright-colored
27 Boadicea's people
28 "— when?"
30 Navajo handiwork
31 Prom rentals
33 Cotton gin name
34 Extra inning
35 Shortstop Pee Wee —
36 Beginning
38 Flowering tree
39 Bookcase-kit item
41 Pooch
42 Long sigh
47 Kind of magnetism
48 Year-end ornament
50 Celery piece
52 Deep fissure
53 Posies' place
54 Tooth problem
55 Actor – Everett
56 Tony's relative
57 Twig juncture
59 Shout from the bridge
60 Rum's partner
61 Weed whacker
62 Dawn goddess

Yesterday's answer



Letters

Row, row your boats, global warming deniers

Re: 'Cool down, global warmers' (Metro, Feb. 19) People are laughing off global warming (referred to as climate change) because we've had a few snowstorms.

Pay attention — snow is water, water is moisture, huge amounts of moisture accumulate in the atmosphere when ocean water evaporates.

The melting of glaciers and polar ice caps increases the level of ocean waters, causing excess moisture (snow) in the atmosphere and flooding.

How soon people forget (or ignore) the ice storm in Atlanta, the flooding in Australia that covered an area the size of Texas, and the flooding occurring right now in England — or the thousands of deaths that occurred a year ago in Europe due to extreme heat.

Laugh it up, fools; hope you have a rowboat. ROBERT LAROSA, VIA EMAIL

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3 SPORTS

Last Flyer standing

Timonen, Finland advances to semis

Defenseman Kimmo Timonen is the only remaining Flyer vying for an Olympic medal after Team Finland defeated host country Russia, 3-1 Wednesday. Jakub Voracek and the Czech Republic fell to the U.S. 5-2 Wednesday, as well. Finland will face top-seeded Sweden in the semifinals Friday while the U.S. faces Canada.

Olympic Owl

Serebrakian hopes to put Armenian skiing on map

When you think of Armenia, downhill skiing is likely not the first thing that will come to mind.

But Temple student Arman Serebrakian hopes he can change that.

On Wednesday morning he earned a respectable 46th place in Men's Giant Slalom event. A total of 109 skiers took to the slope with 22 not even finishing the course.

Though he was born in the United States, and resides in Philadelphia, where he is seeking a medical degree, the 26-year-old athlete is one of just four representing Armenis, a former Soviet Republic in the Sochi games.

"They were a relatively new program in the ski federation," Serebrakian said of becoming a key figure in Armenia's skiing landscape. "I think I can do a lot to help the federation and to help younger athletes in Armenia. It's been really rewarding even though it's not over yet."

Serebrakian will have his second chance in Sochi Saturday in the Slalom. EVAN MACY

See more at www.metro.us

ARMAN SEREBRAKIAN

The Temple medical student and Armenian Olympian discusses the thrill of being an Olympic competitor, the conditions in Sochi, and representing his families' country.

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What has this entire experience been like?
Honestly, it's been pretty surreal, the whole experience. It's not just about these two weeks, it's been the whole year and leading up to this, taking this year off from school. I have experienced so much during this year. All the hours I've spent training, all the hard work my teammates and I have put into this. To the places I was able to visit that I never thought I would go to. The thrills, ups and downs of the season, and being able to get here, showing up and checking into my room.

Is it hard to get into a rhythm, to focus and to practice with so many distractions and other athletes there?
I've been working a lot on my mental skills and it's very tough [to focus]. Even the best guys in the world circuit, the best skiers will tell you it effects you where you race. Everyone in the sport looks forward to the Olympics, everyone wants to do well here.

Can you talk a little about your ties to Philadelphia?
I moved to Philly for school in 2011. I lived in Center City, commuted on the Broad Street Line every day to North Philly. Temple has been great. I can't thank them enough for what they've done and the support they've given me. Especially the administration and the staff there. And also my classmates in the medical school. It's awesome to see their support. I will be back in Philly in May for school.

Arman's Olympics

Arman Serebrakian is competing in two Alpine skiing events.

- He finished in 46th place Wednesday in the Giant Slalom with a time of 1:28.81.
- His first of two runs in the Slalom will take place Saturday at 7:45 a.m. Eastern Time.

What led you to represent Armenia in the games?
I grew up in an Armenian family even though I was in the States. We speak Armenian at home, and in 2009 when I was skiing for the University of Colorado, someone contacted me from the Armenian ski team, we talked and I thought it would be great to start representing them.

Do you find yourself rooting for both Americans and Armenians?
I have a lot of friends who ski representing the U.S. and I root for them, as well as friends on other nations, too. You like to see your friends do well.

How do you hope to perform in your Alpine skiing events?
My most important goal is to ski the best that I can. Like I said before, I want to ski like I know I can. I hate putting a number on these things, but I would love to have the best result that an Armenian skier has had in Alpine ski racing. That I think is totally possible. As far as a medal, that is a reach for me to be honest, but we'll see.

Have you had any bad experiences in your room or in the Olympic village?
Nothing bad at all. There are three villages, the one I am at is pretty big and everything in my room is normal, pretty basic, no TV's or anything in the rooms but I have had no problems and none of my friends have had problems. My family is here and there have been no problems for them either. They have been my No. 1 supporters, my parents and my sister (who skied in the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver herself).

Have you been able to check out any other events or meet any other interesting competitors?
It's tough for me since my events are toward the end. You have to balance things, you don't want to be fatigued or tired. And to watch these events is very tiring. We are working out all day so even standing for an hour watching is tiring at the end of the day. We went to watch the men's freestyle moguls the other night, it was really cool. We have been watching a lot of the Alpine events because it's our sport and it's very interesting, and our training takes place there, too. It's cool, as an athlete with our passes, we get to walk up right to the finish line.

EVAN MACY
evan.macy@metro.us

Quoted

"I love seeing my fellow athletes, talking to them every chance I can, meeting new people. We have been spending a lot of time on the slopes training so far and that's been pretty cool. It's a lot to take in."
Serebrakian

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As slide continues on, 76ers are in transition

NBA. Subpar play and trade rumors surround Sixers during five-game homestand.

Thaddeus Young has been the subject of trade rumors for quite some time. Luckily, the deadline is Thursday. / GETTY IMAGES

The last nine games have been deflating. How could they not be?

The 76ers have been pummeled by 40 or more points twice and by 20 or more four times. They've dropped nine in a row and 19 of 22 overall.

They've lost eight straight games at the Wells Fargo Center. More than that, the Sixers have lost their confidence.

Even when they weren't winning earlier this season, they played hard. The effort was evident at all times.

In a 114-85 loss to Cleveland Tuesday night, they looked extremely sluggish. The Cavaliers consistently beat them up and down the floor.

With the trade deadline looming Thursday afternoon, the Sixers' roster could be in for a shakeup.

Thaddeus Young, Spencer Hawes and Evan Turner could be dealt and the team may look markedly different when the Dallas Mavericks come to town on Friday.

"If it happens, it happens," Young said matter-of-factly of a potential trade.

In the meantime, there are games to be played — 27 more, to be exact. At 15-40, the Sixers are in prime position for the NBA Lottery. But for now, it's tough to lose on a daily basis.

"I think there were some effort problems no doubt," Sixers coach Brett Brown said. "I think when you're losing games at this stage of the year, there's a beat down effect that we're trying to avoid. I want those guys to feel good about themselves. I want them to find a way to help themselves. When you don't feel great about yourself, you see a bunch of problems that I think are consequential."

The Sixers haven't lost this many games in one stretch at home since the 1996-97 season. Losing is tough enough. To continue dropping home games is even tougher.

ANDY JASNER
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Winter Olympics.
Semifinals showdown pits USA vs. Canada

David Backes scored a key goal in USA's win Wednesday. / GETTY IMAGES

The only way it could be any better is if it was the gold medal game.

But Olympic final or not, Team USA will get its rematch with Sidney Crosby and Team Canada Friday at noon.

Everyone knows about "Sid the Kid's" game-winner to clinch the gold medal four years ago in Vancouver, and many of the Americans on the squad look to get rid of a bitter taste from 2010.

The U.S. has one of the hottest skaters in the entire Olympics, first time Olympian and former Flyer James van Riemsdyk, who scored yet another goal in the U.S. team's 5-2 win over the Czech Republic in the quarterfinals.

For the Canadians, a 2-1 win over Latvia that could have been a disastrous loss sets the squad up for Friday's showdown, with Shea Weber posting the game-winner. EVAN MACY

Trade rumors

Sixers could pull trigger for Rockets' Asik

Trade talks between the 76ers and Rockets over center Omer Asik are heating up again, with the trade deadline looming at 3 p.m. Thursday.

CBS Sports reported that the Sixers could be the landing spot for the unhappy 7-foot big man.

Reports in December stated the Rockets' asking price would be Thaddeus Young.

The Sixers are $11 million under the salary cap and have an open roster spot, so they could also make the move without relinquishing a player. METRO

Third base battle

Asche likely to start, but has competition

After an impressive 2013, Cody Asche is the leading contender to start at third base for the Phillies in 2014, but there is still work to be done to lock up the spot.

Philadelphia's No. 2-ranked prospect Maikel Franco, who plays third base, has been making a good impression on manager Ryne Sandberg.

"Really good moves at third base," Sandberg told Phillies.com. "Real good glove. He has a knack for the harder the play it is, the softer he is."

Sandberg also said Franco has a "good quality swing." METRO

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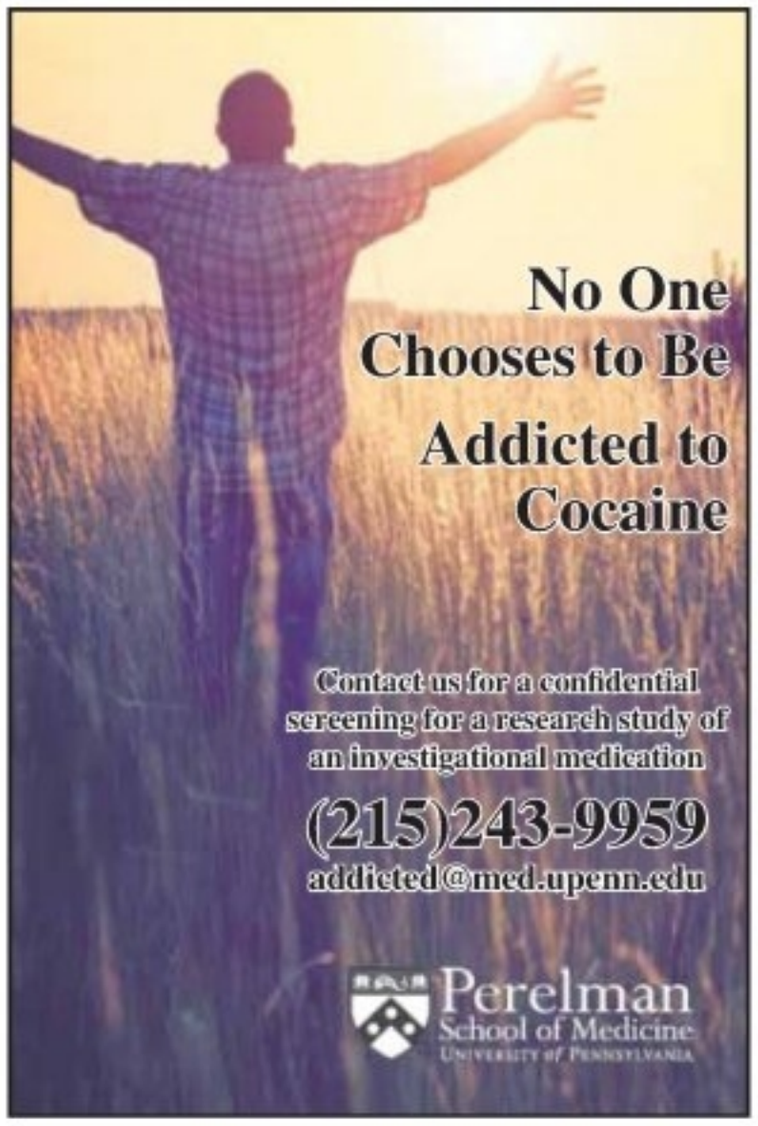
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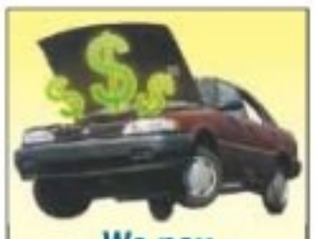

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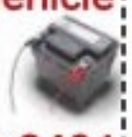

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